

IN THE WORKS

TUNE IN HERE FOR NEWS ABOUT PERSONNEL SYSTEM REFORM IN WASHINGTON

January 2004

INSIDE IN THE WORKS:

Implementing the New Computer System	1
Ethics Board Decision on EBUs	2
How Will Washington Works Benefit the State and Employees	2



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A Great Workforce, Getting Better

IMPLEMENTING THE NEW COMPUTER SYSTEM

To support all of the Washington Works changes (Civil Service Reform, Competitive Contracting and Collective Bargaining), the state's outdated personnel and payroll computer system is being replaced with a modern human resource management system. The new human resource information system that will support Washington Works will be rolled out in three releases, to ensure agencies can smoothly transition to the new system.

The first release will contain everything needed to maintain personnel records and pay state employees. Implementation of the first release will begin in January 2005, and will be completed in time to support implementation of collective bargaining, competitive contracting and civil service reforms on July 1, 2005.

The second and third releases will add new tools, including some employee self-service components, such as allowing employees to directly access leave information or make address changes. These releases will be rolled out statewide in August and October 2005.

It may seem simple and straightforward – install the software package, provide users the training they need, and let them get to work. But it's a bit more complicated.

Though Washington State is a single employer, it is composed of over 100 agencies, boards and commissions. Each organization has a distinctive mission and a structure built around that mission. Many have unique personnel processes. For the new system to work efficiently, agencies may need to standardize some of their personnel processes statewide.

The way that people do their jobs and the tasks they perform may change. For example, changes to an employee's status (such as a promotion) might now require separate entries by the personnel office and the payroll office. Under the new system, this information could be entered in one place and all related records automatically updated.

VIEW PAST ISSUES: DEC 2003 | OCT 2003 | AUG 2003

In the Works is an electronic newsletter home-based at the *Washington Works* website: www.washingtonworks.wa.gov

STATE ETHICS BOARD DECISION ON EMPLOYEE BUSINESS UNITS

Staff at the state's Executive Ethics Board have concluded that state workers may use state resources when preparing a bid during competitive contracting, as long as they follow General Administration's rules for employee business units.

Brian Malarky, executive director of the Washington State Executive Ethics Board, testified at a public hearing January 16 that General Administration's proposed rule on the issue is consistent with current state law: [RCW.42.52.160](#), Use of persons, money or property for private gain.

The Ethics Board recommended several changes to the draft rule that, if adopted, would ensure that displaced workers would be eligible to work for private contractors.

A formal ruling by the Executive Ethics Board will be issued soon.

The strategy for putting the new system into place has been carefully planned to make sure agencies and system users are ready when the time comes to change over.

The Human Resource Management System (HRMS) project has already met a number of critical milestones, and is currently on schedule and moving towards the first phase of deployment, now only a year away, in January 2005.

State employees can find more information about the project on the state's Intranet at <http://hrms.dop.wa.gov>.

Information is also available on the Department of Personnel website.

The site also includes details on the proposed mapping of current job classes into the new occupational categories and an opportunity to comment on the proposed changes.

The proposed classification and compensation rules will be posted for comment from January 30 through February 20.

HOW WILL WASHINGTON WORKS BENEFIT THE STATE AND ITS EMPLOYEES?

Washington state government has a great workforce, which will get even better when we simplify the personnel system. Employees will have greater participation in the issues that affect their work and will have:

- ★ More opportunity to advance in their careers or change jobs;
- ★ Fair and consistent working conditions across state government;
- ★ Ability to negotiate union contracts on key issues - wages, hours and work rules; and
- ★ A greater opportunity to create the most competitive service delivery mechanisms.

Managers will be accountable for performance and results, and will have the tools to reward excellent performance and take action when needed. While these reforms will create many improvements in the end, change can be difficult and stressful for all staff. Training will be offered to help managers and other key staff support their agencies through the transition. Managers are encouraged to listen and acknowledge the concerns of their employees.